



NEWS ADVISORY

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PORTLAND FORUM OFFERS SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS EXCESSIVE FEDERAL REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT

WHO:	SBA National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens, members of the Regional Regulatory Fairness Board for Region I from Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont and representatives of federal regulatory agencies will hear concerns, comments and complaints about federal regulatory enforcement and compliance. Small business owners, representatives of community organizations and trade associations, and business leaders are invited to testify about compliance and enforcement of regulations by Federal agencies.
WHAT:	To create a more cooperative regulatory environment among federal agencies and small businesses, Congress has directed the SBA and the National Ombudsman to hold Regulatory Fairness Forums across the United States. Concerns and complaints aired at this forum will be directed to the appropriate Federal regulatory agency for a high-level review. If any small business, non-profit organization, or small government entity believe they have experienced unfair Federal regulatory enforcement or compliance actions they may submit their comments to our office and at forums. The National Ombudsman requests that the particular Federal Agency review the specific issues and respond to our office within a specified time period. In many instances the Federal Agency has reduced or waived particular penalties and/or compliance actions. At a minimum, the agencies take another look at the enforcement action to ensure fairness.
WHEN:	Thursday, August 16, 2007 Registration: 9:30 a.m. – 10 a.m. Hearing: 10 a.m. to Noon
WHERE:	Portland SCORE Office 100 Middle Street, 2 nd Floor Portland, ME 04101
MEDIA:	National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens will be available on August 16 at noon for media interviews.

Anyone desiring confidentiality may request that his or her name not be released and may submit written testimony in lieu of a public appearance at the hearing.

Any small business concerned about excessive enforcement of federal regulations can contact their local SBA district office or the National Ombudsman at 888-REG-FAIR (888-734-3247) or go to the National Ombudsman Web site at www.sba.gov/ombudsman. **For more information on the August 16th Regulatory Fairness Forum, contact Bonnie Erickson at the SBA in Augusta at (207) 622-8275.**